



# The Green Clan

## Keep Recycled Material Clean

One estimate of recycling is that for every 1000 pounds of material collected for recycling, about 200 pounds is too impure and winds up in a landfill. Remember, it is not recycled simply because you deposit it in a recy-

cling bin. It is only recycled if it gets turned into new material products. Our bins, for instance, get their share of contaminated material that will probably wind up in a landfill as trash. Some

ment plant. It all takes time.

In the quarterly letter, it always states that you do not need to use an alternative water supply. You don't have to, but if you prefer, then use whatever water supply you like. A local water quality expert stated to us that if you drank 2 liters of our water per day for 60 years, then you'd run a slight risk of getting cancer from our levels of THM and HAA, a slight risk. That's why EPA tells us we do not need an alternative water supply.

Our office will continue mailing the noncompliance letter, but we'd like to assure you that the dangers are minimal.

Some information obtained from water consultant

Whenever a water treatment plant uses chlorine as the primary method of water purification, then it quickly becomes noncompliant with EPA Water Quality Standards that have been in effect since 2005. Consequently, our water plant on the reservation has been noncompliant since 2005. The reason for the noncompliance is the levels of trihalomethane (THM's) and haloacetic acid (HAA) in our water. They build up fast when you use chlorine to purify. You may have noticed a quarterly letter in your mailbox which alerts you to the problem. We are obligated by law to in-

form you of the non-compliance. However, 10, even 20, years ago you were probably drinking the same levels of THM and HAA from our waterplant, and yet, we were not in violation or noncompliance. EPA, remember, changed their standards in 2005. This change affected most waterplants in Kansas, as most of them were noncompliant too. Many still are, and some have ceased to function due to the costs of upgrades. Still, others merged with larger plants and ceased being independent. Currently, we are waiting on IHS to help with equipment needed to upgrade our treat-

people, for example, mix plastic, aluminum, or trash in the same bag. That bag will not be recycled and should have been thrown away if it wasn't going to be separated. Please separate.

## Illegal Dumping is a Criminal Offense

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If you respect traditional tribal values, then you probably don't regard Mother Earth as your personal trash can. Not everybody, however, holds those values in high regard, and some illegal dumping does occur on the rez. The Environmental Office has logged 21 illegal dumpsites on the rez; the location of those sites are registered with Indian Health Services where data is stored nationally for Native American Reservations. We may have more illegal dumpsites that have yet to be detected. Most of the dumpsites are many years old and have never been cleaned up. They are classified

as inactive.

Recently, a couple of the old dumpsites have become active again with people throwing trash into them. When this happens, our office, or the Police Department, investigates the garbage in an effort to determine who had dumped illegally. Once the identity of the person is known, they are given the opportunity to pick up their trash and dispose of it properly. If they fail to do that in a timely manner, then the next step is to appear in Tribal Court.

Tribal Code #517 details that unlawful dumping of garbage, trash, refuse, junk and debris

shall result in a fine of \$250.00 or imprisonment not to exceed 3 months, or both. This Tribal Code was passed into Public Law on February 6, 1990.

The Kickapoo Environmental Office does not like to see Tribal Members encounter difficulty for violations of this code, but our office is obligated to help protect our environment for the good of all Tribal Members and future Tribal Members. In time we hope to obtain the finances and the resources to clean up the existing illegal dumps, thereby offering Kickapoo people a cleaner environment.

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## A Hazmat Spill in the House

Some information obtained from EPA website

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If the Fire Department dons special suits and breathing masks while urging you to clear out of the area, chances are you're experiencing a hazardous material spill such as an overturned tanker truck on highway 20. Did you know that if you break a compact fluorescent light bulb (cfl) in your home, it's a bit like a highway hazmat spill? Clear the area, take caution, avoid contamination, avoid mercury contamination. That's right, there's small amounts of mercury in cfl's, and you don't want to breathe it or pass it on to others. In fact, EPA has an entire page of what to do on their

website, and reading it could actually scare a person. You bought those cfl's to save money and help the environment, and now you find out they come with a brand new hazard. Wow!

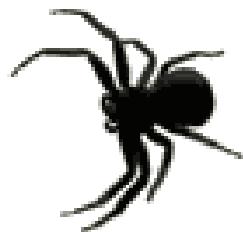
Check out the EPA website to find out why you don't want to vacuum up a busted CFL bulb. It's not like an incandescent bulb since incandescents don't contain mercury. The levels of mercury aren't astronomical, but treat it seriously.

To avoid stirring up dust and spreading mercury around, don't sweep or vacuum it up; instead, use cardboard to scoop it up,

then use sticky tape to pick up the small pieces, and follow this up by wiping the area with wet paper towels. Wash your hands, turn off central air/heat until the area is cleaned up, and if you have any questions consult the epa webpage on the internet.

So you see  
why a bro-  
ken cfl is  
like a  
hazmat spill.

Any ques-  
tions call  
our office  
for assis-  
tance.



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